

**Virginia Cave Board
Saturday, April 29, 2006
Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia, Woodstock, Virginia**

Virginia Cave Board Members Present

Ms Andrea Futrell, Vice Chairman
Bob Barns, Treasurer
Dr. David C. Culver
Mr. Drew Harrison
Dr. John R. Holsinger
Mr. Tom Lera
Ms. Barbara L. Moss

Virginia Cave Board Members Not Present

Ms. Claire Ward, Chairman
Mr. Joe Davis
Ms. Judy Molnar
Virginia Department of Historical Resources representative

DCR Staff Present

Mr. Joey Fagan
Mr. Chris Hobson
Mr. Wil Orndorff
Ms. Carol Zokaite

Others Present

Ms. Patti Barns
Ms. Karen M. Kastning
Mr. Charles Maus
Ms. Babs Melton
Mr. Gary Moss, National Speleological Society

Call to Order

Ms. Andrea Futrell called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. and declared a quorum present.

Introduction and Announcements

Ms. Futrell welcomed members, staff, and guests.

Ms. Futrell expressed thanks on behalf of the Cave Board to the Town of Grottoes, Virginia for providing the meeting room.

All in attendance introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes from December 3, 2005

MOTION: Mr. Tom Lera moved that the minutes of the December 3, 2005 meeting of the Virginia Cave Board be approved as corrected.

SECOND: Ms. Barbara Moss seconded

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurers Report

The treasurer's report will be submitted to the Board at a later time.

Old Business

Education and Outreach Committee

Ms. Moss reported that much of the work of the Education and Outreach Committee is being accomplished by on-line communications between the members of the committee. Ms. Babs Melton, Executive Director of Crystal Caverns, will serve as a member of the Education and Outreach Committee.

Work is continuing by the Cave Board to development of a bat brochure. An educational event is being planned to provide training for show cave staff about bats. Fund raising possibilities were discussed. Ms. Carol Zokaites reported that the DCR Karst Program is producing a brochure on the Virginia Big-eared Bat, the Virginia State Bat.

Materials are being prepared for distribution to teachers for Cave Week. The teacher packets will be available throughout the year from any of Virginia's show caves or by request from the Cave Board or the DCR Karst Program. 2006 Cave Week will be observed October 8-14 in conjunction with Earth Science Week.

The Cave Owners Newsletter was mailed on January 1, 2006. The issue featured highlighted the biodiversity of Virginia's caves, and featured a cover article on the Virginia Big-eared Bat, designated the official state bat by the legislature in 2005.

Joint Technical Committee

Ms. Futrell reported that blasting on the site of a residential development in Strasburg, near Crystal Caverns, appears to be causing settling and collapse in the cave. Ms. Babs Melton of the Wayside Foundation, the Executive Director of Crystal Caverns, noted that damage to the structure of the cave is occurring as well as probable negative impacts to the biological and historical resources of Crystal Caverns and other nearby caves. Mr. Lera noted that similar problems in the Edwards Aquifer of Texas have fostered alternatives involving environmentally sustainable designs and development practices for use in karst terranes to better protect cave and groundwater resources. Ms. Melton expressed concerns that current regulations in Virginia do little to prevent negative impacts such as those occurring at Crystal Caverns.

Ms. Futrell reported that the Cave Board has received a response from Mr. Joe Maroon, Director of DCR, in regards to a letter sent to him by the Board requesting that he meet with members of the Cave Board to discuss ways to better protect caves and karst groundwater resources through improved stormwater management practices and regulations. A meeting between Mr. Maroon and Cave Board representatives will likely take place sometime during the summer.

Karst Program Report

Mr. Wil Orndorff reported on recent work by the DCR Karst Program.

A study by Schnabel Engineering with the Karst Program of the proposed route of Duke Energy's Jewell Ridge Natural Gas Pipeline through the Wards Cove and Maiden Spring area of Tazewell County has been completed and all the pipeline routes have been adjusted accordingly to minimize impacts to caves and karst resources.

Mr. Orndorff reported The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality held a hearing, with comments from DCR, DGIF, DEQ, local citizens, and representatives of the Frederick County Sanitation Authority, regarding environmental impacts associated with the proposed withdrawal of water from Blue Spring by the Frederick County Sanitation Authority for use as a municipal water supply. The Frederick County Sanitation Authority proposes withdrawing water at the rate of one million gallons per day (MGD) from the spring. The normal flow of the spring is 1.2 to 1.7 MGD. Blue Spring provides the water that flows into Ogdens Cave, a biologically significant cave that is being sought after for purchase as a DCR Natural Area Preserve. Blue Spring is responsible for approximately 80% of the normal flow Buffalo Marsh Run. These issues were discussed in a March meeting between the applicant and DEQ, with DCR and DGIF (Department of Game and Inland Fisheries) staff present. DCR and DGIF staff suggested that a significantly lower withdrawal rate of approximately 200,000 gallons per day would be a more reasonable proposal, less likely to impact the stream and cave water quality and

fauna. DEQ has not yet issued a permit to the sanitation authority to withdraw water from Blue Spring.

Mr. Orndorff announced that EPA Funding of karst protection activities of the DCR Karst Program through Chapter 319 of the Clean Water Act would, in coming years, be more closely linked to specific implementation projects in support of the Virginia TMDL Program.

Karst Education Report

Ms. Carol Zokaites reported on the educational activities of the DCR Karst Program. The Karst Program has participated in the Growing Communities on Karst Conferences at Shepherdstown and Lewisburg, and a workshop at Pearisburg, Virginia. A two-day Project Underground Facilitators workshop was held in February for 26 participants. The new Virginia Master Naturalist (VMN) was discussed. One of various suggested VMN curriculum objectives is to describe the significance of karst and caves in Virginia.

New Business

Dr. David Culver noted that development pressures would continue to grow, especially in the Shenandoah Valley and along the I-81 corridor. Dr. Culver expressed the need to identify, prioritize, and protect cave and karst resources in the Shenandoah Valley as well as throughout Virginia. Positive steps are required in order to ensure protection of Virginia's rare cave biota and associated habitat. Mr. Charles Maus suggested that the Cave Board participate in a series of regional meetings with other government and non-government organizations in several locations throughout Virginia's karst to identify strategies and ways to plan and work together to protect cave and karst resources in the Commonwealth.

MOTION: Dr. Culver moved that the Virginia Cave Board appoint a representative to work with the Cave Conservancy of the Virginias and other stakeholders to establish a forum to discuss strategies to protect cave and karst resources in Virginia.

SECOND: Ms. Barbara Moss seconded

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Announcements

Ms. Karen Kastning announced that the Bruce Museum of Arts and Science in Greenwich, Connecticut is hosting two exhibits on caves, "Caves, the Inside Story" and "Caves: A Fragile Wilderness," a traveling exhibition from the Smithsonian Institution.

Ms. Kastning reported that landowner of Falling Spring Hollow in Montgomery County is seeking to reestablish the wetlands associated with karstic seeps and travertine deposits on his property.

Mr. Orndorff reported that The Nature Conservancy is working to negotiate a conservation easement on 800 acres of karst in Rye Cove in Scott County.

Mr. Joey Fagan presented Dr. John Holsinger with VAR Outstanding Service Award for his decades of service to the Virginia Region of the National Speleological Society. Dr. Holsinger served as director of the Virginia Cave Survey from 1964 until 1974. The Virginia Department of Mineral Resources published Descriptions of Virginia Caves by Dr. Holsinger in 1975. Dr. Holsinger is well known for his outstanding contributions to karst science and biospeleology.

Set Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Virginia Cave Board will be held in September at Grand Caverns, at Grottoes, Virginia.

Adjournment

Mr. Lera moved the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Andrew Harrison seconded. Ms. Futrell adjourned the meeting at 2:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Board Chairman

Joseph H. Fagan
Secretary